

# A History of The GAA From Cú Chulainn to Shefflin

Education Department, GAA Museum, Croke Park



# How to use this Pack

The GAA Museum is committed to creating a learning environment and providing lifelong learning experiences which are meaningful, accessible, engaging and stimulating. The museum's Education Department offers a range of learning resources and activities which link directly to the Irish National Primary SESE History, SESE Geography, English, Visual Arts and Physical Education Curricula.

This resource pack is designed to help primary school teachers plan an educational visit to the GAA Museum in Croke Park. The pack includes information on the GAA Museum primary school education programme, along with ten different curriculum linked GAA topics. Each topic includes teacher's notes and classroom resources that have been chosen for its cross curricular value. This resource pack contains everything you need to plan a successful, engaging and meaningful visit for your class to the GAA Museum.

## Teacher's Notes

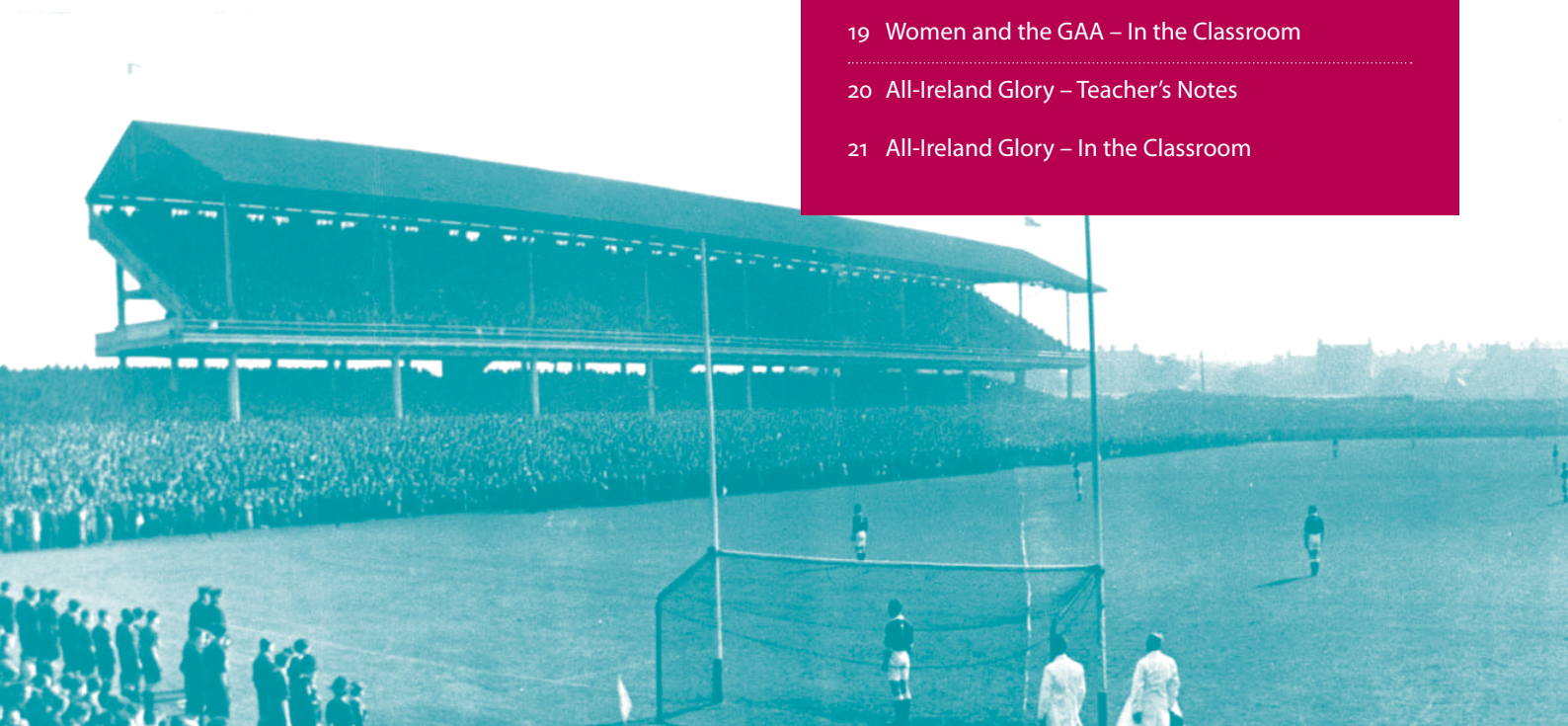
Teacher's Notes provide background information on an assortment of GAA topics which can be used when devising a lesson plan.

## In the Classroom

Classroom resources include suggested discussion topics, activities and/or questions. These resources are designed to be photocopied and used in the classroom either in preparation for a GAA Museum visit or as follow up work after a visit has taken place.

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# The GAA Museum for Primary Schools

A visit to the GAA Museum, located under the Cusack Stand in Croke Park, offers a unique and fun opportunity for your class to learn more about the history of the Gaelic Athletic Association through guided tours and museum exhibits. The museum houses a vast collection of sporting artefacts illustrating the development of gaelic games from ancient times to the present day including the original Sam Maguire and Liam MacCarthy cups. Over 40 audio visual shows bring to life the players, games and unique moments of the GAA's history. In the museum's resource centre children can select and view games from the past while in a specially designed interactive games area they can test their own GAA skills.

A typical visit is two hours long and includes the screening of a short audio-visual entitled 'A Sunday in September' (15 minutes) museum activity sheets or a Cú Chulainn workshop (30 minutes), time in the museum interactive games area (30 minutes) and a behind-the-scenes guided tour of the stadium (40 minutes).

## Activity Sheets

Teachers can choose from two types of activity sheets. **The GAA Museum Activity Trail** has been designed for older children aged 9-12 years and the **Trophy Trail** has been designed for younger children aged 6-9 years. Both activity sheets are available in English and Irish.

## Cú Chulainn Workshop

Step back in time to an ancient land of legends, magic, kings and warriors. This hands-on history workshop focuses on life in the Iron Age and the origins of gaelic games through the medium of Irish legends and the museum's handling collection. The legend of how Ireland's greatest warrior and hurler, Cú Chulainn, got his name through slaying the hound of Culann is retold and explored through the use of the museum's handling collection. *This workshop is available to pre-booked groups of 20-30 children and is suitable for children ages 7-12 years.*

## Stadium Tour

Experience Croke Park on a behind-the-scenes guided tour of one of the most historic and modern sporting arenas in the world. Our tour guides will bring to life the history, magic and excitement of Croke Park by guiding your class through the dressing rooms, warm-up area, player's tunnel and of course, pitch side!



## Lunch Facilities

The GAA Museum Café is open daily during museum hours serving refreshments, snacks and hot lunches. For groups wishing to bring a packed lunch a lunchroom overlooking the pitch is available on request at no extra cost.

## Access

The GAA Museum and Croke Park Stadium Tour are fully accessible to those with physical disabilities. There is also a wheelchair available for use, as well as a lift and exterior ramp. Should you have special requirements, it is advisable to let us know at the time of booking.

## Opening Times

The GAA Museum is open for group bookings on a daily basis, Monday to Saturday, from 9.30am to 5.00pm. Advance booking is required and it should be noted that at peak times availability cannot be guaranteed.

## How to Book

Please note that **all** school visits to the GAA Museum must be booked in advance by contacting the Bookings Department – Tel: (01) 819 2374 or email [tours@crokepark.ie](mailto:tours@crokepark.ie)



# The Legend of Cú Chulainn

As a young boy Setanta was told many stories about his uncle King Conor Mac Nessa, his Kingdom at Emhain Macha and the famous Macra. The Macra was set up by King Conor and was a training school for young boys to become future warriors in the king's army. The Macra trained everyday to use weapons and challenged each other to games especially hurling as it was regarded as a game of great skill and speed.

Setanta longed to become a member of the Macra and at aged nine he set out with determination from his home on the Cooley Mountains for Emhain Macha. In his hands he carried items to shorten his journey, a hurley made out of brass, a sliotar made out of silver and a spear. Along the journey he would strike the silver sliotar with the brass hurl as hard as he could then throw the hurl and then the spear into the air after the sliotar and run to catch all three in succession without letting them hit the ground.

As Setanta arrived at Emhain Macha the boys of the Macra were playing hurling as King Conor looked on. Setanta rushed in to play, he beat every boy to the sliotar then dribbled, pucked and carried it on his hurl the length of the playing pitch and finally hit it unstopably into the goal. In a fit of anger at the intrusion, the boys charged at Setanta with their hurleys but he fought them all off, single-handedly!

The king, not recognising his young nephew, intervened and demanded to know who Setanta was? Setanta explained his story. King Conor was delighted to meet his nephew and remarked that if Setanta was half as good a warrior as he was a hurler then he would be a rare catch! Setanta's dream came true when King Conor invited him to become a member of the Macra.

Shortly after joining the Macra Setanta was playing hurling when King Conor was passing on his way to a feast at the house of his blacksmith, Culann. He stopped to watch the boys playing and noticed that it was two teams playing as normal except that Setanta was playing on his own against the two teams! As a reward Conor invited Setanta to the feast, however Setanta explained that he couldn't leave just yet as the game wasn't finished. It was agreed that Setanta would follow Conor to Culann's house after the game.

After the match Setanta set off for Culann's fort with his hurl and sliotar to keep him amused on the journey. As he arrived at Culann's fort he heard a great growl and saw a giant beast bounding towards him. When King Conor arrived at Culann's fort he had forgotten about his invitation to Setanta and Culann released his ferocious hound to protect the fort. Without a second thought and with all his speed and accuracy, Setanta hurled his sliotar into the hound's gaping mouth and killed him instantly. Inside, the feast was interrupted by a ferocious howling. In horror King Conor remembered Setanta and believed his nephew to be torn to shreds by the mighty hound of Culann. King Conor and Culann rushed outside and were amazed to see Setanta alive and the hound dead.

King Conor was delighted to see his nephew alive and well, however Culann was upset that his mighty watchdog was dead. Seeing Culann's distress at the loss of his hound Setanta offered Culann a deal. If Culann found another young dog Setanta would train the dog to be as magnificent as the one he had killed. In the meantime Setanta himself would defend Culann's fort and be Culann's watchdog.

Culann happily accepted this offer and Setanta was given the new name of Cú Chulainn, the hound (cú) of Culann. Eventually Setanta completed his promise to Culann but was known as Cú Chulainn until the day he died.

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## Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Story. Strand Unit – Stories.

**History.** Strand – Early People and Ancient Society. Strand Unit – The Celts.

**Visual Arts.** Strand – Drawing. Strand Unit – Making Drawings.



## Cú Chulainn, The Táin and the Celts

The legend of Cú Chulainn is one of many interrelating stories that make up the Táin. The Táin was committed to written word in the 11th Century *Book of the Dun Cow*, the 12th Century *Book of Leinster* and the 14th century *Book of Lecan*. Historians, folklorists and archaeologists believe that the Táin is set in the Irish Iron Age. The Irish Iron Age dates from 500BC to 500AD and is characterised by the use of iron for weapons and tools. The people who lived in Ireland at the time were known as the Celts and lived a farming, clan-based lifestyle. Not only has the Táin provided us with Ireland's greatest hero and hurler but also provides us with the evidence to date hurling to the Irish Iron Age.

## At the GAA Museum

Take part in a Cú Chulainn history workshop.

Learn more about the ancient origins of hurling.

# Design an Iron Age shield for Cú Chulainn

When Setanta joined the Macra he trained everyday to use weapons and defend himself in battle.

Shields were very important for a warrior on the battlefield as they prevented injuries.

Iron Age shields were long, light enough to carry but hard enough to defend against spears and swords.

An Iron Age shield was usually made of wood, covered in leather and had a central boss shaped like an upside down bowl in the centre of the front of the shield. This boss was to protect the hand that was holding the shield on the opposite side.

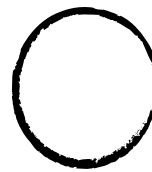
Warriors would decorate their shields in beautiful bright colours in swirls and circles similar to the patterns on this page.

Iron Age people loved decoration and often wore jewellery and bright colours to impress. Even the men wore big jewellery!

## Get Creative

Use these patterns on the page as inspiration to **design a shield** that you think Cú Chulainn would have used going into battle.

Remember the more designs and colour on your shield the more impressive it will look going into battle!



# Seven Men in Thurles

At 3pm on Saturday November 1st 1884 seven men met in Mrs. Hayes' Hotel in Thurles, Co. Tipperary with the aim of setting up a new organisation to govern the playing of Irish pastimes. The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) was born.

For centuries Irish people had been playing Irish games such as gaelic football and hurling. The ancient legends of Ireland tell us how Cú Chulainn, the mighty warrior, excelled at hurling and provide us with evidence for the existence of hurling in the Irish Iron Age. Ancient laws such as the 1366 Statute of Kilkenny forbade *'the games which men call hurling with great clubs of a ball on the ground'* and provide us with evidence for the existence of hurling in early medieval Ireland. However, by the 19th Century there was a decline in the playing of Ireland's ancient games.

The 19th Century was a time of a great revolution in sport. New sporting organisations were formed to organise games into official sports with written rules and administrative bodies. In 1863 the Football Association was founded to regulate soccer in Britain, in 1867 the National Association of Baseball Players was founded in America and in 1871 the Rugby Football Union was founded. As part of the British Empire, English games such as soccer, rugby and cricket were fast becoming popular all over Ireland.

The 19th Century was also characterised by a Gaelic Revival or an interest in all things Irish including language, literature, music, dancing and of course, sports. Many people felt that Ireland was losing its culture and traditional ways of life and were determined to do something about it. One man, Michael Cusack, organised a famous meeting in Thurles and brought about his own revolution in Irish sport.

Cusack was determined to revive the Irish sports of hurling, football and handball and in December 1883 set up the Metropolitan Hurling Club. The success of this club convinced Cusack that hurling could be revived on a nationwide scale and set about getting help for his ideas. In August 1884 Cusack wrote to Maurice Davin suggesting a meeting in Thurles on November 1st. Davin was a world famous athlete and, like Cusack, was anxious to see the revival of both hurling and gaelic football.

On October 11th 1884 Cusack published his famous article *'A word about Irish athletics'* in the United Ireland newspaper calling for the revival of Ireland's national games to be governed by Irish people. Cusack then issued a letter calling on interested people to come to Thurles to attend a meeting to *'take steps for the formation of a Gaelic Association for the preservation and cultivation of our national pastimes'*. The meeting was set for November 1st 1884 at Hayes' Hotel.

At least seven men attended the first meeting of the GAA including Cusack, Davin, P. J. Ryan, John McKay, James Bracken, John Wyse-Power and District Inspector McCarthy. Once this first meeting got underway Davin was elected President while Cusack was chosen as secretary of the newly formed Gaelic Athletic Association. Archbishop Croke, along with Charles Stewart Parnell from the Home Rule Party and Michael Davitt from the Land League were all asked to become patrons of the new Association.

That first meeting was short and to the point, however the foundations were laid for what would become the largest amateur sporting organisation in the world. At a second meeting in Cork on December 27th, Davin was asked to draft the new rules of the Association. Once the rules were drawn up they were published in the national newspapers and also printed in booklet form.

The GAA quickly *'spread throughout the country like wildfire'* and soon every parish in Ireland had a GAA club. Today the GAA is the largest amateur sporting organisation in the world with over 2,600 clubs in Ireland and abroad.

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## Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Life, Society, Work and Culture in the Past. Strand Unit – Language and Culture in Nineteenth Century Ireland.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.



Michael Cusack

### Michael Cusack

Michael Cusack was born in Carron, Co Clare in 1847. He was a fluent Irish speaker and trained as a school teacher. In 1877 Cusack set up his own school in Dublin which became known as 'Cusack's Academy'. He was a well-known figure around Dublin City, a bearded man who constantly carried a blackthorn stick. Cusack's greatest achievement was in bringing about a revolution in Irish sport.

### At the GAA Museum

Read Cusack's letter to Maurice Davin in 1884.

View Maurice Davin's impressive collection of trophies.

Complete the *GAA Museum Activity Trail*.

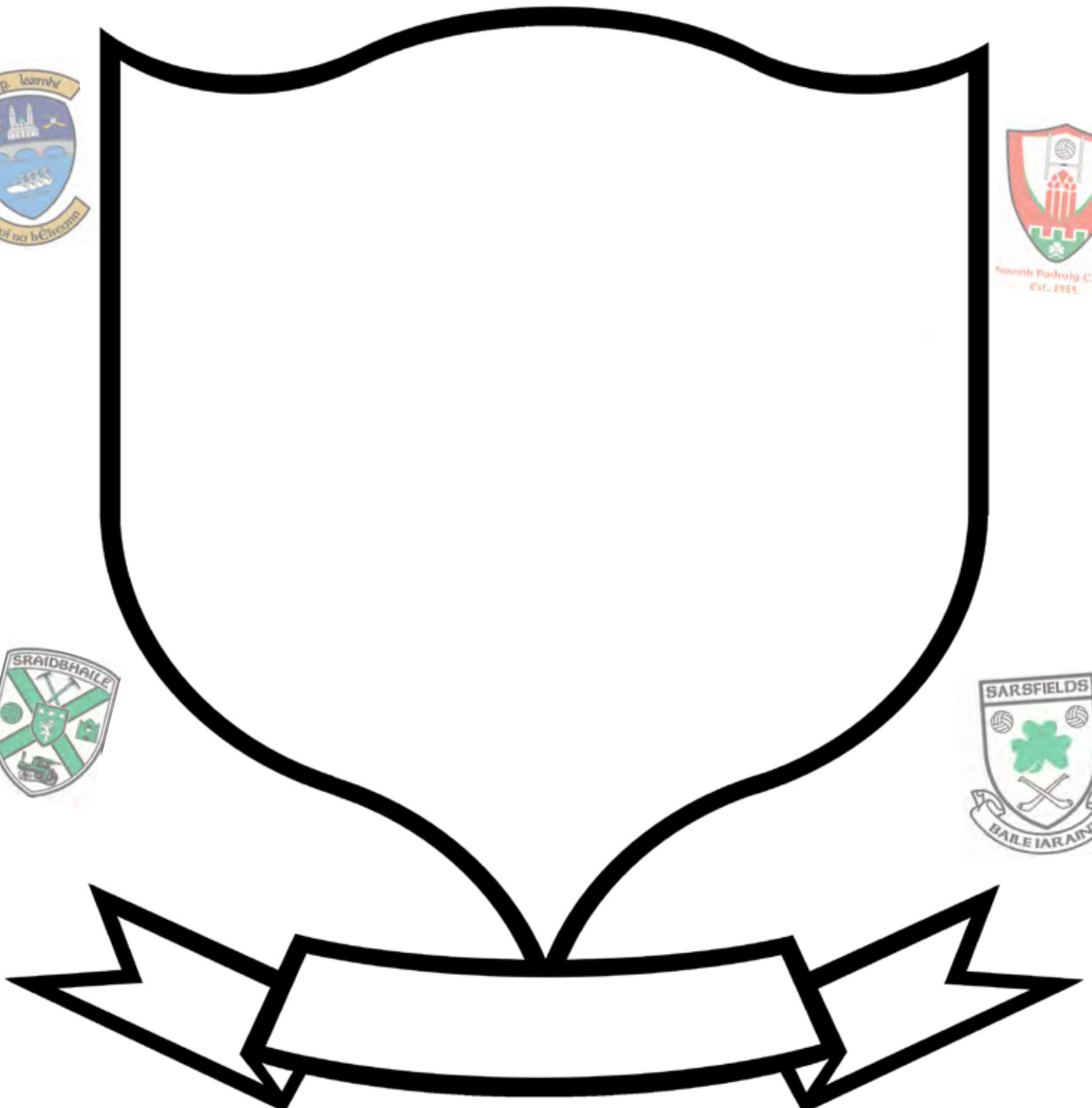
# Working as a Historian

Conduct some research on the names of GAA clubs in your local area. Were they named after someone famous and what symbols do they use for their crest? Use the information you gather to help you complete the activity below.

## Design a Crest for your GAA Club

Imagine that the year is 1884 and you are founding a new GAA Club in your local parish.

**Think of a name** for your new GAA club and **design** a crest using local buildings, sites and people as inspiration.



## Famous Matches: Bloody Sunday 1920

On Sunday November 21st 1920 31 people were killed in Dublin during one of the bloodiest days of the Irish War of Independence. Of the dead, 14 were killed in Croke Park as they attended a challenge football match between Dublin and Tipperary.

The Irish War of Independence broke out on January 21st 1919 in resistance to British rule in Ireland. That first year of the war was quite limited and consisted mainly of attacks on police barracks in search of weapons. The following year however, the scale of the war grew to such an extent that it was called ‘The Year of Terror’. In 1920 the Irish resistance, known as the Irish Volunteers, formed new units known as Flying Columns. These were small, streamlined, heavily-armed bodies of men who moved through the Irish countryside launching sudden attacks on British forces. This was called guerilla warfare and the leader of the Irish resistance was Michael Collins. Collins had even set up a group of Irish spies known as the ‘Squad’.

In response to Irish activities the British Government sent two new armies to Ireland, the Black and Tans and the British Auxiliary Force. The Black and Tans were so called because of their uniform, a mixture of the army khaki uniforms and black police uniforms. The Auxiliaries were ex-officers of the British Army who had fought in World War I. These new British forces raided homes, villages and towns looking for Irish Volunteers and terrorised the people of Ireland. The British Government also sent their own spies to Dublin to uncover Michael Collins’ war plans. These spies were known as the ‘Cairo Gang’.

The ‘Squad’ had been watching the ‘Cairo Gang’ for quite some time and on the morning of November 21st 1920 Michael Collins gave instructions to eliminate the British spy network. At around 9am that morning the ‘Squad’ mounted an operation to shoot the British spies. Across Dublin members of the ‘Squad’ entered houses where members of the ‘Cairo Gang’ were staying and 14 British spies were shot dead.

Later that afternoon the GAA had organised a challenge football match between Dublin and Tipperary in Croke Park. When news broke of the shootings, GAA officials became concerned but nevertheless decided to proceed with the match. So, at 3.15pm the referee, Mick Sammon from Kildare, threw in the ball. Over 10,000 spectators had gathered to watch what was turning out to be an exciting match. Many did not notice an airplane flying low around the field, circling the area a couple of times and then shooting a red flare from the cockpit.

Earlier that day at 1.30pm, orders had been given to the British Auxiliary Force to surround Croke Park and 15 minutes before the end of the match an officer was to warn the crowd by megaphone that every male attending the match would be stopped and searched. As the British officers neared Croke Park they began to fire on what they reported were Irish Volunteer officers near the turnstiles that had opened fire on them first. This shooting continued onto the pitch, where a stampede of spectators and players broke out. Rapid fire continued successively for about 90 seconds.

That afternoon 13 people lay dead in Croke Park. Among the dead was Michael Hogan a Tipperary football player, Jane Boyle who had attended the match with her fiancée, John William Scott aged 14 and Jerome O’Leary aged 10. Over 80 people were injured. Later that day, two high-ranking IRA Officers, Dick McKee and Peadar Clancy along with their civilian friend, Conor Clune, were shot while trying to escape captivity in Dublin Castle. Thomas Hogan, a spectator at the match, died a few days later in hospital due to injuries he sustained in Croke Park.

The total number of people killed in Dublin on November 21st 1920 was 31, ensuring the name Bloody Sunday. This day is remembered as the saddest day in the history of the GAA and one of the bloodiest days of the Irish War of Independence.



Michael Hogan

### Michael Hogan

Michael Hogan was born in Grangemockler, Co. Tipperary in 1896. On Sunday 21st November 1920 he played in the fullback position with Tipperary against Dublin. When shooting broke out in the stadium he was shot while trying to flee the pitch. On Wednesday 24th Michael’s body was brought back to Tipperary. Michael was buried in his footballer’s suit with a tri-colour draped over his coffin. In 1924 a new stand was built in Croke Park and was named in honor of Michael. In 2002 this stand was officially re-opened as part of a redevelopment of the stadium and retained the historic name the Hogan Stand.

### At the GAA Museum

Watch the museum film *National Awakenings*.

See a Bloody Sunday match ticket and the referee’s whistle.

### Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Politics, Conflict and Society. Strand Unit – 1916 and the Foundation of the State.



# Design a wanted poster for Michael Collins

During the Irish War of Independence Michael Collins was one of the most wanted men in Ireland. The British Government offered a reward of £10,000 for his capture.

Conduct some research into Michael Collins and design a wanted poster for his arrest. Include the following information - amount of the reward, description of Michael Collins, why he is wanted and a picture.



# Famous Matches: Thunder and Lightning Final 1939

The 1939 All-Ireland Hurling Final between Cork and Kilkenny has been described as one of the most exciting and famous hurling matches of all time. The game was played during a furious thunder storm on the same day that World War II began.

In 1932 the Nazi Party, under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, came to power in Germany. Hitler wanted to make Germany the most powerful country in Europe and to do this he believed that Germany should conquer its neighbouring countries. In 1938 Hitler annexed Austria and in early 1939 conquered Czechoslovakia. It became clear that Poland was next on Hitler’s list. Britain and France became alarmed and vowed that if Germany invaded Poland they would declare war.

When Hitler’s armies invaded Poland on Friday September 1st 1939 war was inevitable. On Saturday September 2nd Irish Taoiseach, Éamon de Valera, called an emergency meeting of the Dáil and Ireland officially adopted a policy of neutrality. Ireland would not take any side during the war. The following morning, Sunday September 3rd at 9am, a message was delivered to Hitler that if hostilities did not stop by 11am war would be declared.

That same morning GAA fans in Ireland were preparing for the 1939 All-Ireland Hurling Final. Due to torrential rain many fans changed their plans and decided not to attend the match but listen to it over the radio in the comfort and warmth of their own homes. In Europe, Hitler did not respond to Britain’s ultimatum and at 11.15am the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced that Britain and France were now at war with Germany. At 11.27am London’s air sirens began to wail. World War II had begun.

Despite the weather and the news of war, 39,302 GAA fans made the trip to Croke Park. Just as the match was starting the weather changed and the sun finally broke through the rain clouds. At 3.15pm the referee got the match underway. During the first half Kilkenny played against the wind however, they dominated play and took an early lead. At half-time Kilkenny were six points up leading by 2-4 to 1-1!

Just as the game restarted a clap of thunder heralded a massive downpour accompanied by lightning. As the heavens opened Cork started to fight back and in the dying minutes of the game scored a goal to level the sides. Kilkenny, determined not to give up, scored a point that ensured their 12th All-Ireland hurling title. While Kilkenny fans celebrated, Britain, France and Germany prepared for war. Many people attending the 1939 All-Ireland Hurling Final believed that the ferocious weather was an omen or warning sign for the impending evil of World War II.

In Ireland the war became known as ‘*The Emergency*’ and even though the country was neutral the everyday lives of Irish people were greatly affected. As the war progressed certain foods became scarce and each person was allowed a certain amount of items such as sugar, tea, butter and bread which were recorded in ration books. The Government even encouraged people to grow their own vegetables! Because Ireland was neutral the country could not be seen to have an opinion on the war and the government introduced strict censorship over newspapers and radio broadcasts.

During ‘*The Emergency*’ fuel was also in short supply, coal became very scarce and petrol was rationed. By 1941 petrol was practically nonexistent and by 1942 cars were put off the road altogether. In this way the war greatly affected the GAA and attendances at GAA games began to decrease. Horse drawn carts replaced cars on the roads and people either walked or cycled to matches. Trains were also greatly affected due to coal shortages and had to resort to using turf and timber, however this greatly slowed the train down. In 1941 two Kerry men cycled from Killarney to Croke Park on a tandem bike for the All-Ireland Football Final between Kerry and Galway!



1939 All-Ireland Hurling Final ticket.

## Peace

World War II waged for six years until May 8th 1945 when the Germans surrendered in Europe. In total 60 million people died during the war including six million Jews. When peace was declared the world celebrated. However, it was only then that many people found out about the atrocities Hitler had enforced upon the Jewish people of Europe in concentration camps. The world vowed that such a war would never happen again and set up the United Nations (UN) to keep peace among nations.

## At the GAA Museum

Complete the *GAA Museum Activity Trail*.

Try on a replica 1939 Kilkenny or Cork jersey.

## Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Life, Society, Work and Culture in the Past. Strand Unit – Life during World War II.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.

**English.** Strand – Developing Cognitive Abilities Through Language. Strand Unit – Clarifying Thought Through Writing.

# Working as a historian – Using Evidence

The following newspaper article appeared in the Irish Independent on Monday September 8th 1941, the day after the All-Ireland Football Final. The article reports on transport to the match. By 1941 the war was raging for two years and rationing was in place. Read the newspaper article and answer the questions below.

**Opening Score**



Galway opening their scoring with a point.  
—Irish Independent Photo (McM.).

## Thousands Cycled To The Final

**B**ICYCLES solved the transport problem for many of the 45,000-odd people who got to Croke Park yesterday for the All-Ireland football final.

They came city-wards, five and six abreast, along the roads from the mountains of Wicklow, the pastures of Westmeath, and the plains of Kildare.

Two young men sporting the Kerry colours, who wheeled a tandem into a cycle park off Jones's Road, came from Killarney.

They were Michael Halfpenny (21) and Fred Harty (23), both of Dundalk, who had been on holiday in Killarney and decided to cycle to Dublin for the final.

The owner of a cycle park near the football grounds said his customers included a party from Galway.

At the Army Hostel in O'Connell St. was a young soldier who had cycled from Athlone. About 30 others had made the same journey.

Trains arriving at Kingsbridge on Friday and Saturday brought about 5,000 people. A special train from the West on Saturday, with two ordinary trains, brought 1,500 people. Three trains arriving from Belfast up to 1 p.m. yesterday carried 2,500 passengers, while trains from Dundalk and Drogheda carried another 2,000. About 1,500 people arrived at Aston's Quay by bus yesterday morning.

Among the Diplomatic representatives at the match were Dr. Hempel, German Minister; Commendatore Berardis, Italian Minister and Senor Ontiveros, Spanish Minister.

Mr. J. D. Kearney, Canadian

**Victory Symbol**



Bill Dillon, Kerry captain, with the Championship cup at Croke Park.  
—Irish Independent Photo (R.)

**RESULTS**

Kerry ... ..	1 goal 8 points
Galway ... ..	7 points
Attendance ... ..	45,512
Receipts ... ..	£3,540

**RESULTS**

High Commissioner, who was accompanied by Mrs. Kearney, told an *Irish Independent* representative: "I think it was a wonderful game. But the Minor Hurling match between Cork and Antrim took my fancy. It was the first time I had seen a hurling match."

Mr. P. McNamee, President, G.A.A., presenting the cup to Mr. W. Dillon, captain of the Kerry team, referred, in Irish, to the game as "clean and hard-fought." He congratulated Kerry on having won their fifteenth championship, and paid a tribute to the splendid stand made by Galway.

**MEDALS PRESENTED**

At a reception and ceillidhe to the teams, held in the Mansion House last night, under the auspices of the Gaelic League, Aid. Doyle, T.D. Lord Mayor, presented the medals to Mr. Sean Brosnan of the Kerry team.

Aid. Doyle said that as an old player he congratulated Kerry on its great victory, and Galway on its splendid showing.

Mr. Brosnan said their victory was sweet inasmuch as it was Kerry's 15th victory. Paying a warm tribute to Galway, he said there was an old friendship between the teams; they had travelled to the U.S.A. together.

(Report of Final—Page Five).  
(Special Article by Gertrude Gaffney—Page Two).

## Ruhr Works Ablaze

—R.A.F. Claim

(Reuter and Press Association)

WITH intense A.A. fire rattling against their bombers, R.A.F. pilots, on Saturday night, heavily attacked an important

## Warning To Britain And U.S.A.

If Britain and the United States do not understand Japan's real intentions, and continue to act as in the past, they will have to be finally driven out of East Asia, Major Shozo Nakajima, a member of the Japanese Information Board, who

### Questions

1. How did thousands of people travel to the All-Ireland Final?
2. Why do you think so many people travelled to the match in this way?
3. Who won the match and what was the final score?
4. Name three places that people came from to watch the match.
5. Name the captain of the Kerry team who is pictured with the cup at Croke Park.

### Write Your Own Newspaper Report

Imagine that you were at the 1939 All-Ireland Hurling Final. Write a newspaper report mentioning the following:

- Date, time and location of the match
- The weather
- The final scoreline
- The outbreak of World War II

Remember you can give an opinion of the hurling match, however, you cannot give an opinion on the War, only the facts!

## Famous Matches: New York Final 1947

Traditionally the All-Ireland Football and Hurling Finals are played in Croke Park on two Sundays in September. However, in 1947 a decision was taken by the GAA to stage the All-Ireland Football Final at the famous Polo Grounds in New York.

The decision to stage the final stateside was taken to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Great Famine when many Irish people were forced to emigrate to America. It was also hoped that the match would help revive the GAA in North America. The popularity of gaelic games was in serious decline due to the slow-down in Irish emigration after World War II.

In August 1947 Kerry and Cavan won their respective semi-finals and preparations began for the journey of a lifetime. Players were vaccinated for smallpox, passports were organised, visas were issued from the American Embassy and team organisers made the big decision on how players would travel to America – by boat or by plane. It was decided that seven players from each county would travel by boat from Cobh in Co. Cork. On September 2nd, the *SS Mauritania* departed with its footballing cargo. For the players the six-day journey to New York was quite enjoyable as most were well used to travelling by boat, some players even got some training done on the journey!

Six days later on September 8th the *SS Mauritania* docked in New York. The same day the remaining 15 players from each county boarded a Trans World Airlines (TWA) flight from Shannon. Air travel in 1947 was still quite primitive in comparison with today's standards and a flight which today takes roughly seven hours in 1947 took 29 hours! Non-stop flights across the Atlantic weren't possible so the TWA flight stopped in Santa Maria in the Azores, Newfoundland in Canada and Boston in North America before eventually landing in La Guardia airport in New York. For the majority of players this was their first time travelling by air and also their first time in America.

On arrival in New York players split up and made their way to their hotels. The Cavan team were staying in the Hotel Empire while the Kerry team in the Hotel Henry Hudson. On September 11th the whole party were driven along Broadway escorted by a squadron of police officers. They were welcomed at City Hall by the New York City Mayor and then transported to the Hotel Roosevelt for a gala luncheon. The teams spent the remainder of the week training.

On Sunday September 14th the big day arrived and 34,941 Irish-American fans from different American cities poured through the Polo Grounds turnstiles to cheer on the footballers of Cavan and Kerry. Due to the big occasion the GAA organised to have Michéal Ó hEithir commentate on the match which was being transmitted live by radio back to fans in Ireland. At 3.38pm the referee, Martin O'Neill, got the match underway.

After a bad start Cavan were two goals down but fought back to lead going into half time. In a thrilling second half played in the dead heat Kerry ran out of steam. The final score line read Cavan 2-11 Kerry 2-7. That night a banquet was held in the Hotel Commodore and was attended by 1,500 people. The following week on September 22nd an evening match between a Cavan/Kerry selection and a New York selection was played for the benefit of the New York GAA. The entire party sailed home on September 24th and arrived in Dun Laoghaire on October 3rd.

In Cavan the final scoreline had prompted a carnival atmosphere and the returning champions were greeted with bonfires and an estimated 15,000 fans dancing and singing in the streets to the tunes of 15 bands from all around the county. A shortened version of a filming of the match was shown as a feature in cinemas around the county.



1940's New York

### Life in New York 1947

In 1947 New York was a bustling city with a population of nearly 8 million people. Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby were topping the charts, a loaf of bread cost 13 cents, a postage stamp cost 3 cents and Harry S. Truman was US President. In 1947 the Polo Grounds Stadium was home to the New York Giants baseball team. The Polo Grounds was demolished in 1964.

### At the GAA Museum

Try on a replica 1947 Cavan or Kerry jersey.

### Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Continuity and Change Over Time. Strand Unit – Transport.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.

**English.** Strand – Developing Cognitive Abilities through Language. Strand Unit – Clarifying Thought through Writing

## Working as a historian – Oral History

Oral history is the recording of people's memories and experiences through interviews and is a fantastic source of evidence of life in the past for historians. The late Mick Higgins, who played in the 1947 football final, was interviewed by the **GAA Oral History Project**.

Read an extract from Mick's interview and answer the questions below.

*"It was the first time I was ever on a plane. The whole trip took 29 hours to get to America. We were about to leave and we were delayed for over four hours due to high winds and the engine giving trouble. We were more tense travelling on that plane than playing football, it was more nerve wracking! We trained every other day. It was very, very warm, 85 degrees! The pitch was smaller too. No grass on it, it was burnt up, the surface was like concrete! The match was late starting due to different people making speeches. After 10 minutes, Kerry was winning by 8 points to 2. I got a goal and Peter Donoghue got 3 frees and it was a turnaround! We came back by boat, it took us 10 days. It was the size of Croke Park. It was a holiday in itself! The two teams travelled home on the boat together. It was a glorious game, a glorious victory for us but disappointment for Kerry".*

1. **How many hours did it take to get to America by plane?**
2. **Why do you think that the surface of the pitch was like concrete?**
3. **Why was the match delayed?**
4. **Do you think that Mick preferred to travel by plane or by boat? Why?**

## Send a Postcard from New York to Ireland

Imagine that you are in New York to play in the 1947 All-Ireland Football Final. Write a postcard home to your parents telling them about the match, your experiences and your journey to New York.

**Choose one** of the following players

- **Mick Higgins,**  
Cavan player who travelled by plane to New York
- **Paddy Brosnan,**  
Kerry player who travelled by boat to New York

# History of Croke Park

Today Croke Park is home and headquarters to the Gaelic Athletic Association. Each year thousands of GAA fans follow their team to Croke Park, however few are aware that the history of the stadium dates back to 1864 and that the stadium has been known by five different names.

On April 16th 1864 a plot of land was leased to Mr. Maurice Butterley and became known as **‘Butterley’s Field’**. In 1894 a company called the City and Suburban Racecourse and Amusements Grounds Ltd. purchased Butterley’s Field and began leasing it out for sports meetings, whippet racing and gaelic games. Butterley’s Field then became known as the **City and Suburban Racecourse**.

By 1908 the City and Suburban Racecourse was up for sale and on December 17th Frank Brazil Dineen bought the grounds for £3,250. Frank was a former President of the GAA and intended that in time the GAA would purchase the grounds from him. The GAA had made a profit of £1,273 in 1907 and felt that to buy the grounds would put the Association severely in debt. Once purchased Frank set about making changes to the grounds, the pitch was re-laid, terracing was erected and the name was changed to **Jones Road Sports Ground**.

In 1913 the GAA organised a Croke Memorial Tournament to raise funds for a monument to the GAA’s first patron, Archbishop Thomas Croke. The final of this tournament was played on March 4th 1913 between Kerry and Louth in Croke Park in front of a then record attendance of 26,000. The game ended in a draw and the replay was set for June 29th. For the replay the gates were closed after 32,000 spectators had been admitted but thousands more swarmed in over the walls. The two teams were level at half-time but Kerry eventually defeated Louth 2-4 to 0-5.

All attendance records for a GAA match were smashed and the GAA had made £2,365 profit. The tournament was a huge success and the GAA could now afford to erect a monument in Croke’s memory and also purchase a new central GAA sports ground. Later that year the GAA purchased Jones Road Sports Ground and re-named it **Croke Memorial Park**. The name Croke Memorial Park was quickly shortened to **Croke Park** and the stadium became the GAA’s national grounds and administrative headquarters.

Since 1913 Croke Park has undergone significant changes. A new terrace area at the northern end of the ground was created in 1917 using the rubble from O’Connell Street in Dublin, which had been destroyed during the 1916 Rising. This terrace became known as Hill 16. In 1924 a new stand was built along the Jones Road side of the stadium and named the Hogan Stand, in honour of Michael Hogan from Tipperary who had been shot during Bloody Sunday 1920. A new Cusack Stand was completed in 1938. At the Canal End new terracing was built in 1949, the Nally Stand was built in 1952 and the ‘old’ Hogan Stand was replaced in 1959. Thereafter development of the stadium slowed.

In the 1980’s a grand plan for the entire redevelopment of Croke Park was announced. This redevelopment was staged in four phases, a phase for each stand, starting in 1993 with a new Cusack Stand and culminating in 2005 with a new Hill 16. The redevelopment was completed in just 12 years with no disruptions to any All-Ireland finals.

Today Croke Park is one of the largest stadiums in Europe and is truly one of the most historic stadiums in the world.



Archbishop Croke

## What’s in a name?

During its long history GAA headquarters has been known by many different names: Butterley’s Field, The City and Suburban Racecourse, Jones Road Sports Ground, Croke Memorial Park and finally Croke Park. Once the GAA purchased the stadium in 1913 it was decided to name it in honour of Archbishop Thomas William Croke of Cashel. In 1884 Archbishop Croke was invited to become the first patron of the GAA, an invitation he happily accepted. Archbishop Croke supported the GAA and its games until his death, often providing prizes for competitions.

## At the GAA Museum

Experience a Croke Park behind-the-scenes guided tour.

Follow the Stadium’s history on the Croke Park Timeline exhibition.

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## Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Buildings, Sites or Ruins in My Locality.

## Working as a historian – Using Evidence

The GAA Museum collects match programmes as they contain valuable information on historic GAA matches. The first match programme below is from the 1913 All-Ireland Hurling Final while the second match programme is from the 1913 All-Ireland Football Final. Note the different names of the stadium on the two programmes. The GAA purchased Jones Road Sports Ground and re-named it the Croke Memorial Park in 1913.

Look closely at the two programmes, compare the information and answer the following questions.



### Questions

1. What two teams played in the hurling final?
2. What two teams played in the football final?
3. What is the name of the referee for both matches?
4. Are there any clues on the two programmes to tell you when Jones' Road became Croke Park?
5. What was the name of the printers who published both programmes?

### Find Out

Who won the 1913 All-Ireland football and hurling finals?

What is the capacity of Croke Park today?

## Heroes from the Past

Every GAA fan, club and county has its heroes. Heroes are people who have accomplished remarkable things in their lifetime and are greatly admired and respected. Some have scored a winning goal or point. Some have club medals, some have county medals while others have All-Ireland medals. Some heroes might even have been manager of a winning team.

Down through the years the GAA has given Irish boys and girls thousands of role models and heroes. We have chosen just two, one hurler and one footballer. Mick O’Connell was a Kerry footballer while Jack Lynch was a Cork hurler and footballer. Both of these players are considered GAA heroes.

### Mick O’Connell

Mick O’Connell was born on Valentia Island off the coast of County Kerry. Mick grew up on the island hearing about famous Kerry footballers and dreamed of one day becoming a footballer himself. As a young boy he played football at every opportunity, at school with his friends and classmates and at home with his brothers and neighbours.

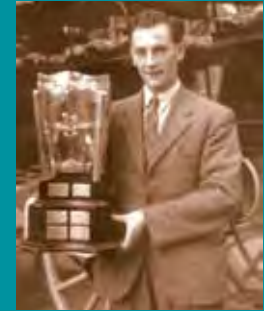


Mick always tried to run a little faster, jump a little higher and practiced to make his left foot just as good as his right foot. His dedication paid off and in 1955 he was given an opportunity to play for the Kerry minor football team. The following year Mick got another lucky break and became a regular player on the Kerry senior team. Three years later, in 1959, Mick had reached his first All-Ireland final against Galway. On the day Mick had the great honour of captaining his team and when Kerry defeated Galway he lifted the Sam Maguire Cup in front of thousands of Kerry fans. However, in all the commotion and celebrations of winning Mick headed home to Valentia without ‘Sam’. Panic set in but a quick call to Croke Park and the cup was found on a table in the Kerry dressing room!

In later years Mick won another three All-Ireland medals with Kerry in 1962, 1969 and 1970. Throughout his playing career he trained rigorously for long hours in all sorts of weather perfecting his football skills and improving his fitness. He was unbeatable in the air, a master of the high catch and the most admired and graceful midfielder the game has ever known. Mick O’Connell was truly one of the first ‘superstars’ of gaelic football.

### Jack Lynch

Jack Lynch was born in 1917 in Shandon Street, Cork City and as a child he spent his after school hours playing hurling in the old Cork Butter Market near his home. When it got too dark to see the small sliotar the young hurlers turned their attention to the larger gaelic football and on wet days they would play hurling in the cellar of a friend’s house! It was here in the streets of Cork City that Jack practiced the hurling and football skills that would see him become a famous dual player.



As Jack’s GAA skills developed he played his hurling with Glen Rovers GAA Club and his football with St. Nicholas’ GAA Club. In the 1930’s he featured on both the Cork minor hurling and football teams and eventually went on to become a star of the Cork senior hurling and football teams. Between the years of 1941 and 1946 Jack’s dedication and sporting talents on the GAA field were rewarded with a record six consecutive All-Ireland final wins. Between the years of 1941 and 1944 the Cork hurlers won a famous 4-in-a-row. In 1945 the Cork footballers defeated Cavan to lift the Sam Maguire Cup. In 1946 Jack won his sixth All-Ireland medal again in hurling when Cork defeated Kilkenny. To date Jack is the only man to ever play in and win six All-Ireland finals in-a-row.

As a GAA player Jack had amazing speed, strength and skill however many people remember him for his career off the GAA field. In later life Jack became a politician and served two terms as Taoiseach of Ireland from 1966 to 1973 and 1977 to 1979. Throughout his life Jack Lynch earned the respect of players, spectators, constituents and politicians alike.

### Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Story. Strand Unit – Stories from the Lives of People in the Past.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.

### At the GAA Museum

View and count Jack Lynch’s medals.

Watch past All-Ireland finals at the GAA Museum Resource Centre.



# Who is your GAA Hero?

Is it your favourite player, a friend, a coach, someone famous, someone you know, someone you admire or someone you respect? Choose a few words from the picture below and use them as inspiration to write about or draw a picture of your GAA Hero.

Why not create a classroom **Hero Wall** by putting every pupil's hero up on a wall of your classroom.



## Who is your GAA Hero?

This GAA Hero was chosen by \_\_\_\_\_

# Heroes of Today

Each year the GAA All-Star Awards are presented to honour and reward the current heroes of football and hurling for their skill and sportsmanship. The All-Star Awards began in 1971 and since then one team of hurlers and one team of footballers are selected annually from the best players in every county.

Along with the 15 football players and the 15 hurling players selected each year two additional players are chosen as Footballer of the Year and Hurler of the Year. These are players who have given outstanding performances and are truly regarded as heroes. We have chosen two current GAA stars who are admired, respected and provide excellent role models for young GAA fans, Colm Cooper from Kerry and Henry Shefflin from Kilkenny.

## Colm ‘Gooch’ Cooper

Colm Cooper was born into a family of seven children in Killarney, Co. Kerry in 1983. Like most Kerry children his childhood heroes growing up included the many Kerry footballers who had won countless All-Ireland medals. Today Colm himself is a much-loved role model and hero to thousands of Irish children and is better known by his childhood nickname, ‘Gooch’.



Colm’s first time in Croke Park was not as a player but as a mascot for Dr. Crokes in the 1992 All-Ireland Club Final when the Killarney side defeated Dublin champions Thomas Davis. Colm made the transition from mascot to player and took his place on the Dr. Crokes senior team at the tender age of 16. He quickly made a name for himself and was spotted by Kerry selectors. In 2002 Colm made his senior debut for Kerry against Laois in the Division Two National Football League Final. That year Kerry proceeded through the championship to meet Armagh in the All-Ireland Football Final. On the day Kerry lost to Armagh but Colm’s arrival on the scene was awarded with his first All-Star Award. With his first All-Star under his belt Colm had to wait another two years for his first All-Ireland medal. In 2004 Kerry met and defeated Mayo in the All-Ireland final, Colm scored 1-05 and received his second All-Star Award as 2004 Footballer of the Year.

By the age of 26 Colm Cooper had won four All-Ireland football medals, five All-Star Awards and the admiration of players and fans across the country. A gifted and stylish corner forward, Colm’s genius on the football field have made him a star. This freckle-faced, flame-haired Kerry man is truly a modern GAA hero.

## Henry Shefflin

Henry Shefflin was born in 1979 into a family of seven, four boys and two girls. As a youngster growing up in Ballyhale, a Kilkenny hurling stronghold, hurling was a way of life. Everyday Henry would practice hurling with his younger brother in the squash court behind his father’s pub. In school Henry’s hurling skills were quickly noticed and nurtured by his headmaster.



As he grew older Henry won titles at every hurling grade – an All-Ireland Colleges medal with St. Kierans, two Fitzgibbon Cup titles with Waterford Institute of Technology, two Leinster minor medals, two Leinster under-21 medals and an All-Ireland under-21 medal. On 20th June 1999 Henry made his county debut against Laois under newly-appointed Kilkenny Manager Brian Cody. That same year Henry reached his first All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final. Kilkenny were narrowly defeated by old rivals Cork. The following year Kilkenny again reached the All-Ireland Hurling Final and this time were victorious over Offaly. Henry collected his first All-Ireland medal and his first All-Star Award. To date Henry has won seven All-Ireland medals, nine All-Star Awards and in 2002 and 2006 he was named Hurler of the Year. Despite his many awards, Henry cites his greatest achievement as winning his first county final with his club Ballyhale Shamrocks in 2006.

Henry Shefflin is a rare talent, a masterful hurler full of speed, stamina and skill. In his native Kilkenny he is known simply as ‘King Henry’ and across the country fans and players consider him to be one of the greatest hurlers of the last four decades. A modern day Cú Chulainn, King Henry is a giant of the hurling world and an inspiration to all young GAA players.

## Curriculum Links

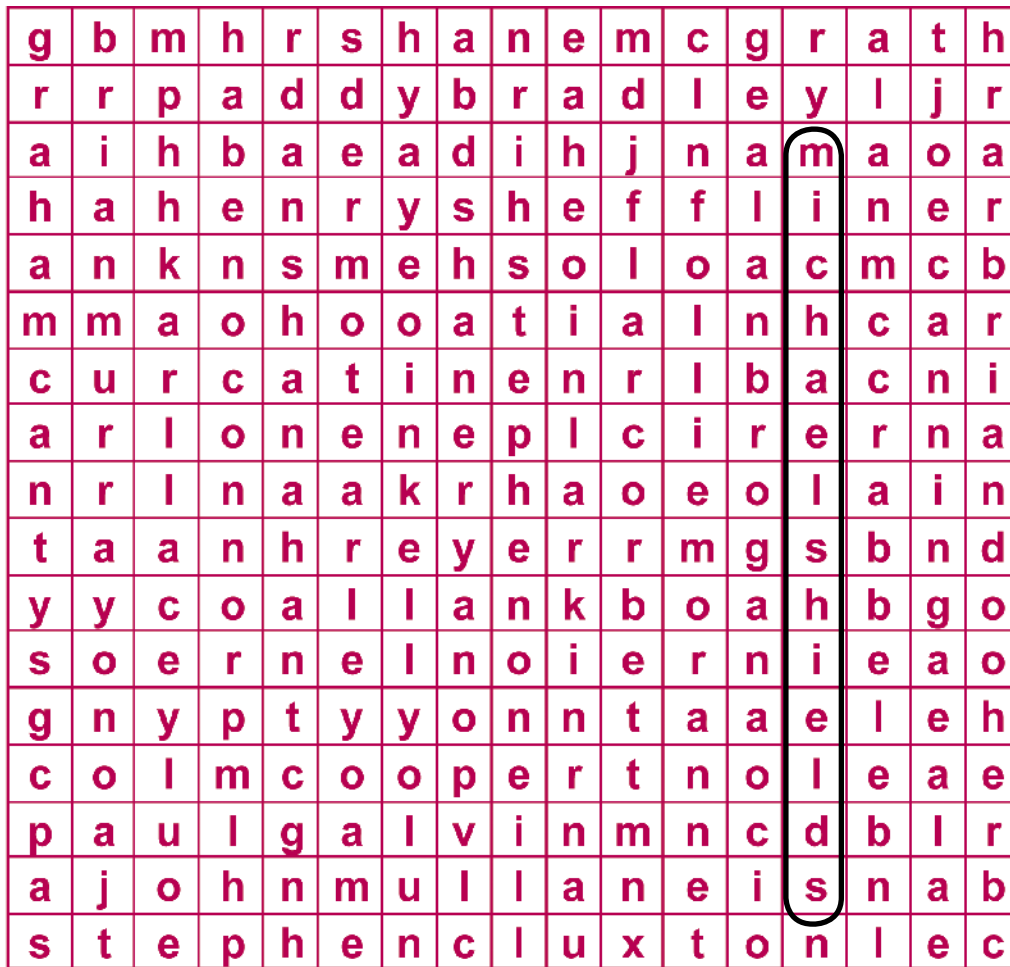
**English.** Strand – Developing Cognitive Abilities through Language. Strand Unit – Reading to Develop Interests, Attitudes, Information Retrieval Skills and the Ability to Think.

**English.** Strand – Competence and Confidence in Using Language. Strand Unit – Reading for Pleasure and Information.

# The Big GAA Hero Word Search

In the word search below are the names of 24 well-known GAA hurlers and footballers. See if you can find all 24! The first one is done for you.

<del>Michael Shields</del>	Alan Brogan	Brian Dooher	Colm Cooper
Dermot Earley	Graham Canty	Karl Lacey	Paddy Bradley
Paul Galvin	Shane Ryan	Stephen Cluxton	Stephen O'Neill
Alan McCrabbe	Ben O'Connor	Brian Murray	Dan Shanahan
Eoin Kelly	Eoin Larkin	Henry Shefflin	Joe Canning
John Mullane	Lar Corbett	Ollie Moran	Shane McGrath



## ACTIVITY

Choose one GAA hero from the list above and conduct some research into that person. Write a report on your chosen GAA hero and include the following information:

1. Does your GAA hero play hurling or football?
2. What county team does your GAA hero play for?
3. What job does your GAA hero have during the day?
4. Has your GAA hero won any big awards, medals or trophies?
5. What do you admire most about your GAA hero?

Read your report aloud to the class

## Women and the GAA

When Michael Cusack and Maurice Davin set up the GAA in 1884 in Thurles, they saw no place for women in the new Association apart from on the sidelines as spectators cheering on the men. Since the early days of the GAA the role of women in sport has changed dramatically.

The late 19th century saw a revolution in sport, not just in Ireland, but all over the world. Games were transformed into organised sports with written rules and administrative bodies. These sporting bodies were set up by men for men. A dominant belief at the time was that every human possessed a fixed amount of energy and if women used that energy for sports the results could be hazardous, they would not have enough energy to fulfil their roles as wives and mothers! However, by the early 1900’s women were fighting for equal rights to education, work and the right to vote. Attitudes towards the role of women in society were slowly changing and this naturally included the participation of women in sports.

In 1903 a ladies hurling team known as Keatings was set up in Dublin by Máire Ní Chinnéide. In 1904 a second club was set up in Dublin called Cú Chulainn’s. The formation of these two clubs led to the first recorded public game of camogie in July 1904 when Keatings and Cú Chulainn’s met at the Meath Agricultural Society Grounds. Cú Chulainn players wore red sashes while Keatings players wore yellow. The Camogie Association or Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael was founded a year later in 1905 with Máire Ní Chinnéide as its first President. The aim of the new organisation was to provide the women of Ireland with a version of hurling. The name Camógaíocht derives from ‘Camóg’ meaning a young, small camán or hurling stick. The camogie stick for women was lighter than the men’s stick, the sliotar weighed less than a hurling sliotar and the dimensions of the pitch were also smaller.

At that time it was seen as unacceptable for women to wear short skirts, shorts or even trousers and so they were confined to restrictive clothing in the form of a blouse and long heavy skirt covering the ankles. One special rule drawn up for camogie was that players could not use their long dresses to stop the sliotar! As the years went by and times changed the hemlines crept up and long skirts were replaced by gymslips which were worn to cover the knees with black stockings, black boots, white blouses and belts. Today, of course, there is little difference between the clothing worn by men and women playing hurling and camogie.

Since the foundation of the GAA in 1884 women’s involvement in sports has come a long way. Camogie has developed and grown in popularity. In 1932 the first All-Ireland Camogie Final was held and two years later the finals were played in Croke Park. During the 1960’s the women of Ireland began playing gaelic football and by the early 1970’s the demand was sufficient to establish an association for ladies football. On July 18th 1974 a group of men and women met in Hayes’ Hotel in Thurles and established the Ladies Gaelic Football Association. The rules of football were modified and an All-Ireland championship was set up. In 2004 the Camogie Association celebrated its 100th Anniversary with a year of special events. One of the key events to mark the milestone was a re-enactment of that first public match back in July 1904 between Keatings and Cú Chulainn’s.

Today the games have never been so popular with 515 camogie clubs and 1,100 ladies football clubs around the country and abroad. Many of these early pioneers of women’s sport in Ireland were ridiculed, however, these women paved the way for thousands of Irish girls and women to play Camogie and gaelic football. The women who play gaelic games today are just as dedicated and determined as those women who dared to fight for their right to play sports over 100 years ago.

### Curriculum Links

**History.** Strand – Eras of Change and Conflict. Strand Unit – Changing Roles of Women in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

**History.** Strand – Story. Strand Unit – Stories from the Lives of People in the Past.

**History.** Strand – Continuity and Change over time. Strand Unit – Clothes.



Kathleen Mills

### Kathleen Mills

During a playing career that spanned 20 years Kathleen Mills won 15 All-Ireland camogie titles with Dublin, a record that is unlikely to be beaten by any man or woman in gaelic games! Kathleen began playing camogie with the Dublin senior camogie team in 1941 and retired at the age of 38 after winning her 15th All-Ireland title. In recognition of her achievements, each year the senior All-Ireland winning captain receives a trophy bearing her name. Kathleen Mills was the first superstar of the camogie world and one of the greatest-ever camogie players.

### At the GAA Museum

Compare clothes worn by past camogie players from 1904, 1950’s and the present day.

Count Kathleen Mills’ impressive collection of medals.

Watch footage of old camogie matches.

# Women and the GAA

Since the 19th Century women's participation in sports has increased greatly, along with changes that have developed in women's fashion. Below are four pictures of camogie players taken in four different decades over the last 100 years.

Study the images carefully and answer the questions below.



## Questions

1. Which picture do you think is the oldest? Why?
2. How have clothes worn by camogie players changed down through the years?
3. How have attitudes to safety changed down through the years?
4. Can you see any similarities between all the photographs?
5. Imagine you are one of the girls in picture three, describe the clothes that you are wearing.
6. In your opinion which picture has the most practical clothes for playing camogie? why?

## Find out

Who are the current All-Ireland Camogie Champions?

Who are the current All-Ireland Ladies Football Champions?

## Activity

Study the pictures carefully. Estimate when each picture was taken. Cut out all of the pictures and place them on a timeline in your copy book starting with the oldest.

# All-Ireland Glory

The All-Ireland championship season starts every year in May and finishes in September when the All-Ireland football champions and the All-Ireland hurling champions are crowned. Each year thousands of GAA fans from all over the country make the annual pilgrimage to Croke Park in search of All-Ireland glory.

The first All-Ireland finals were played in 1887. At that time county teams were represented by the best GAA clubs and finals were played at different locations around the country, not in Croke Park! That first year Thurles, representing Tipperary, won the Hurling Final which was played in Birr, County Offaly and Limerick Commercials won the Football Final which was played in Clonskeagh, County Dublin. It wasn't until nine years later in 1896 that the All-Ireland finals were first played at Croke Park, then known as Jones' Road.

All-Ireland finals are held each year on two Sundays in September. Once in a while an unforgettable All-Ireland comes around. In 1939 the All-Ireland Hurling Final between Cork and Kilkenny was played during a ferocious thunder storm on the very same day that World War II began. In 1947 the All-Ireland Football Final between Kerry and Cavan was played in New York City. In 1957 the All-Ireland Hurling Final pre-match parade of Waterford and Kilkenny players was filmed for the movie 'Rooney' with actor John Gregson lining out with Kilkenny players. In 1961 the largest-ever crowd attended the All-Ireland Football Final between Down and Offaly. In 1982 a last minute goal from Offaly denied Kerry a historic five-in-a-row. In 1984 the All-Ireland Hurling Final was played in Semple Stadium.

Since the first All-Ireland finals in 1887 the ultimate dream of any GAA footballer or hurler has been to lift one of the All-Ireland trophies. For football the Sam Maguire Cup is awarded while for hurling the Liam MacCarthy Cup is awarded.

## Sam Maguire Cup

The Sam Maguire Cup is awarded each year to the All-Ireland gaelic football champions.

The cup was designed by Hopkins & Hopkins in Dublin to look like the early Christian Ardagh Chalice. The famous cup stands 16 inches high and weighs 12lbs.



The cup was named in honour of a Cork man, Sam Maguire, who lived in London and was very involved in the GAA scene there at the turn of the 20th Century. The cup was presented to the GAA by a group of Sam Maguire's friends and on September 30th 1928 the Sam Maguire Cup made its first appearance in Croke Park. It was presented to Kildare after they defeated Cavan 2-6 to 2-5 in the All-Ireland Football Final.

In 1988 it was decided that the famous cup should retire and a replica cup was made. The first team to win the 'new' Sam Maguire was Meath when they defeated Cork 0-13 to 0-12. Since 1988 the 'new' Sam Maguire Cup is presented annually to the All-Ireland football champions while the original Sam Maguire Cup remains on display in the GAA Museum in Croke Park.

## Liam MacCarthy Cup

The Liam MacCarthy Cup is awarded each year to the All-Ireland hurling champions. The cup is designed to look like a medieval drinking cup and was made by Edmund Johnson Jewellers of Grafton Street in Dublin.



The cup was named in honour of Liam MacCarthy, a former President of the London GAA County Board. Liam was a lifelong fan of GAA games and in 1920 he donated £50 to the GAA to make a silver cup. On March 4th 1923 the Liam MacCarthy Cup made its first appearance in Croke Park when it was presented to Limerick after they defeated Dublin 8-05 to 3-02 in the delayed 1921 All-Ireland Hurling Final.

By 1992 the Liam MacCarthy was 69 years old and the GAA decided to retire the cup and introduce a replica. That year Kilkenny became the first team to win the 'new' Liam MacCarthy. Since 1992 the 'new' Liam MacCarthy is presented annually to the All-Ireland Hurling Champions while the original Liam MacCarthy remains on display in the GAA Museum in Croke Park.

## Curriculum links

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Games and Pastimes in the Past.

**History.** Strand – Local Studies. Strand Unit – Buildings, Sites or Ruins in my Locality.

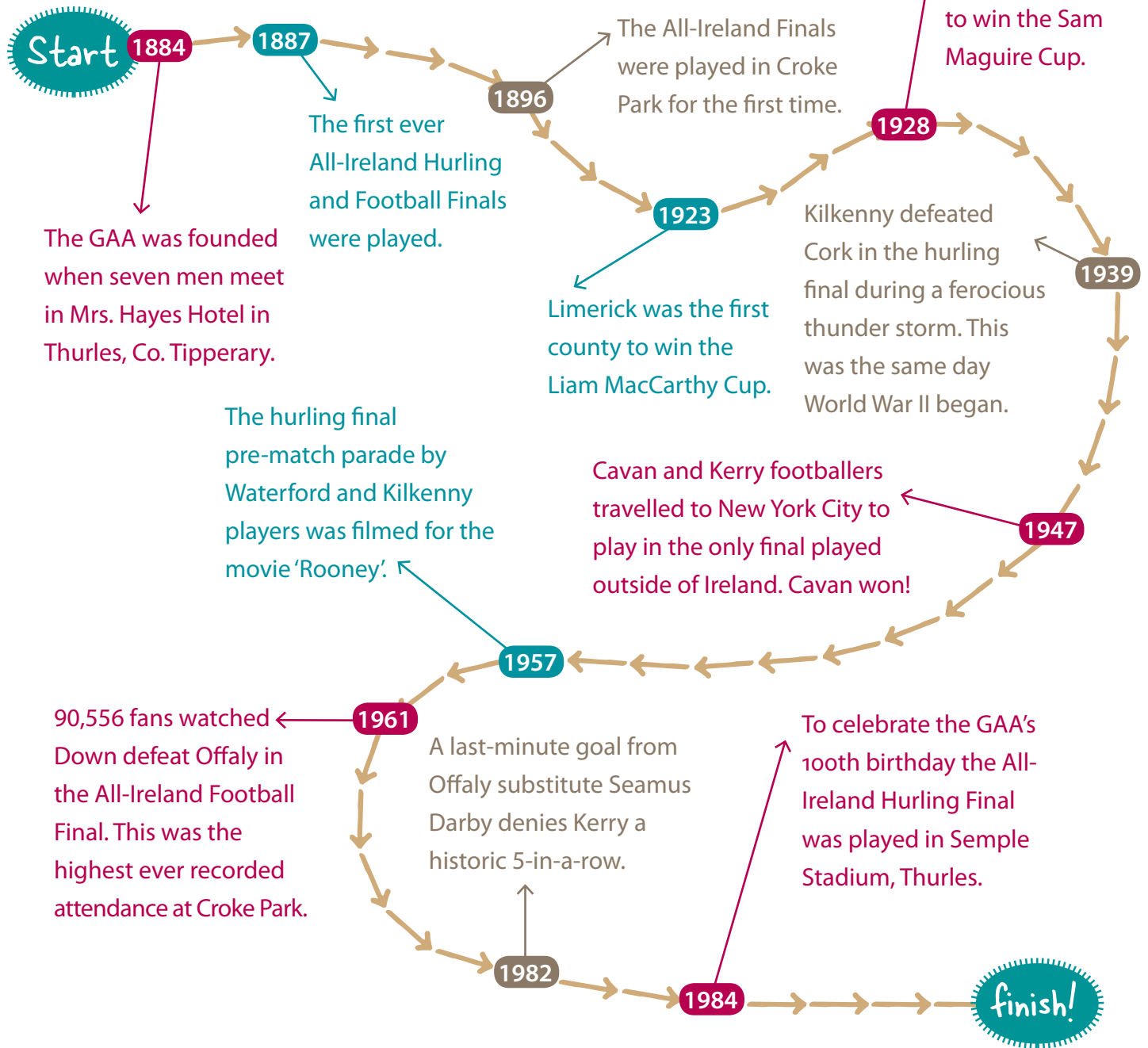
## At the GAA Museum

Visit the GAA Museum trophy room.

Complete the *GAA Museum Trophy Trail*.

# The Big All-Ireland Final Timeline

Follow the timeline and answer the following questions:



## QUESTIONS:

1. Where and when was the GAA founded?
2. What year were the first finals played in Croke Park?
3. Who was the first county to win the Sam Maguire Cup?
4. What movie was filmed at the 1957 hurling final?
5. How many fans went to the 1961 football final?

## ACTIVITY

Imagine that you have won an All-Ireland final! You worked and trained hard and now your moment of All-Ireland glory has arrived as you take to the podium in Croke Park to receive the trophy in front of thousands of fans.

1. Describe your feelings?
2. Write your All-Ireland winning speech

## Acknowledgements

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Henry Shefflin image © www.inpho.ie  
2009 All-Ireland Camogie Final image © www.inpho.ie  
Design a GAA Crest courtesy of Cúl4kids  
Interview with Mick Higgins courtesy of GAA Oral History Project

### TEXT

Selina O'Regan, GAA Museum Croke Park.

## GAA Resources

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### ONLINE

**GAA Museum** <http://www.crokepark.ie/gaa-museum>  
**Gaelic Athletic Association** <http://www.gaa.ie>  
**GAA Oral History Project** <http://www.bc.edu/centers/irish/gaahistory>  
**Croke Park** <http://www.crokepark.ie>  
**Cúl4Kids** [www.cul4kids.ie](http://www.cul4kids.ie)

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